SALLIE'S BOY.

BY JESSIE M. E. SAXBY,

Author of "Dora Coyne," etc., etc.

"I wish I had kept some of my boy dreams."

CHAPTER XI.

"LET KNOWLEDGE GROW FROM MORE TO MORE."

THE years slipped past; they go somehow without heeding, whether we desire their flight to be slow or fast; and we suddenly find ourselves contemplating them as a tale that is told, gone from us for ever.

To those who are looking forward to some goal ahead the years seem to go at a snail's pace; but to one who is intensely living in the present time flies on falcon wings. Six or seven years seemed "no time at all" to impetuous Fairly and Clara, working away in high spirits and with success, spending their winters in busy London, and their happy summers in many lands. They wondered that so many seasons had actually gone without making either feel older or more sedate, and they said, "Why, it seems but yesterday since we left Oaklea."

But those years, so short to *them*, had seemed an age to Ben, even though he was working eagerly all the time. However, his school-days were ended, he was "growed up," and the desire of his heart was to be. He was going to Roy to win a fortune; but there was one thing to do before beginning the battle of life, and that was to see Sallie once again.

She had never been able to come, as Ben had hoped she would, to pay a visit to her old home. She could not per-

suade Hubert to revisit Wately—indeed, she did not wonder at his persistent objection to doing so; and since *he* would not go, *she* would not.

We may be sure Sallie had not watched over her husband all those years without learning just what his failings were, and how far her influence went. She knew that he loved her dearly according to his selfish manner, and that he was ready enough to adopt her counsel and be guided by her in many important particulars. She was well aware that her presence had had a most salutary effect upon him, and that but for her he must long since have passed over the boundary-line between reckless gambling and swindling.

He was so much the slave of his ruling passion that he could not desist from it, but during all those years he had not stained his hands with crime which brings one within the clutches of the law; and men knew him as an honourable man, who could be trusted to pay what he owed.

Luck had been with him off and on, sometimes dazzling his fancy by bringing him goodly sums, but never enough to make him free once more, never sufficient to make him say, "I can stop here." So he had gone on from week to week and from year to year, and his wife, patient and prayerful as ever, could only bide God's time and be thankful that nothing worse had happened.

She had seen some members of her family during that time. Fairly and Clara, racing about holiday-making, had more than once visited the French city where Sallie lived, and Annie, a gay bride, had halted there on her honeymoon to present her rich, elderly husband to "sis."

When Sallie saw her young sister (tricked out in jewels and laces, her thoughts engrossed by her own personal charms and worldly pursuits) she sighed, and felt that this, too, might be called one of the fatal results of her unfinished stewardship; for had Sallie continued to watch over Annie's training, she had not grown so foolish and headstrong, she had not been left to follow her own whims and vanities until they led her to contract a mercenary marriage.

Those over whom Sallie's soul had most yearned, her dreaming, helplessly intellectual father, blind Roger, and Benjie, she never saw all that time; but the latter's frequent and touching letters told her indirectly how much those three had need of their queen, and her longing to be near them became at times a very agony of remorseful love.

Roy took care that his sister should not lack comfort, and she had no scruples about accepting his generosity; though Holmes, with much shame, said, when she told him of her brother's gifts, "Is it needful that Roy should send you money, my dear? It feels confoundedly hard that you will take from him what he wins through commercial speculations, and you won't take from me what I win in another way."

She had often tried to explain the difference so as to convince him of his mistake, but all to no purpose; so she did not argue *then*. She merely said, "Roy is a very prudent man of business; he does not speculate; but, Hubert, if you do not like my taking help in that way, I certainly will not."

"My dear girl, I don't mind. It is my ill-luck that has prevented me from surrounding you with every luxury. And since your qualms of conscience won't let you accept even the little I can now bring, I suppose it's—all right that you should take what Roy sends. But when I free the Wately estates from those sharpers this kind of thing will end, and you will be back at the Manor as of old."

After that Sallie felt it was best not to mention Roy's cheques when she talked to her husband, and the Squire did not allude to the subject again.

"And *this* is my baby! my pet Benjie!" Sallie whispered, when, after those years of waiting, Ben came to see her before setting out to join Roy. "Oh, darling, darling, how I have dreamed of you! and though I knew you were growing and must soon be 'growed,' I have somehow thought of you as still my little 'baby.' And now I see you, and you are so tall and strong, but still my bonnie boy!"

She had to look *up* now to meet Ben's blue eyes—still the counterpart of her own—and his arms were large enough to do more than half encircle her waist. He held her close to his heart, and murmured again and again, "Mam-lee! Mam-lee!—at last—dear, dear, sis!" He could not get beyond those broken expressions of exceeding gladness for some time, and Sallie was fain to rest her head on his shoulder and be rested in spirit by the knowledge of his nearness.

But by-and-by she looked up again, smiling her smile of old, through tears, and taking his face between her hands, she murmured fondly, "Yes, it is still my Benjie; you are not changed, though you've 'growed.' I knew *you* would not change. God has kept my pet unspotted from the world, that I might prove His forgiving love to the full."

"But, sis, though you are still Mam-lee and our sweet Sallie, you are changed. I did not—no, I did not expect to find you so very pale and worn. Dear, why did you not tell us you were tired and sad? Those years must have been hard to make you look so. Fairly told us you looked older, but he did not say you were like *this*."

"The years have been long and a little weary," she sighed; and that was all Sallie said, or ever would say, of the misery and loneliness of soul through which she had passed.

Ben turned her round to one of the long mirrors which French taste, correct in many things, woefully deficient in this, loves to insert into every available place.

The sister and brother stood silent for a minute regarding their own reflections, and then Sallie said, "There is a difference, Ben, since I carried you across the stepping-stones, and, looking down, saw us mirrored in the Silver—a great difference."

"Yet we have been coming along the same way," replied Ben, in his slow, melodious voice; "we have not forgotten what we agreed upon then. Can you wait a little longer, Sis? just a little longer, till I overtake you on the road, and pick you up, and carry you?"

"I can wait," she answered.

Then Hubert came in, looking flushed and excited. He had not known of Ben's coming, as he had been away for a few days, and Sallie had not written to tell him of her brother's proposal to visit them. She did not write to Hubert when he left her—as he did at rare intervals—for a short period, as he seldom left an address, and she knew very well that during those feverish hours of gambling at Monte Carlo her letter was more likely than not to lie unopened in his pocket, even supposing it reached him. He usually went off on those expeditions in a hurry, and when he had had a stroke of luck. He always came back without announcing his intention beforehand, and depressed in spirits, having gained nothing by his venture, and more frequently lost what he staked.

On this occasion, as I said, the Squire appeared considerably agitated, and not a little disconcerted at finding Ben with his wife; but after the first greetings were over he recovered his composure, and chatted agreeably upon general topics, avoiding, however, reference to his own plans.

Ben had never very much loved the Squire, had never admired, as his older brothers had done, the manifold graces of person which had cast such a glamour over Sallie's judgment, and had tempted her from the path of duty. Now

that Ben was older, retaining the clear-eyed, simple observation of his childhood, and joining to it the knowledge which comes with time, he did not see reason for liking his brother-in-law any better. Sallie's faithful heart would not acknowledge that Hubert had woefully deteriorated, but Ben saw it, and was wroth within himself.

"How can he be so selfish, how can he go on so, with Sallie beside him?" thought Ben. "How can he be blind to her sorrowful expression and fragile appearance? how can he rattle along, talking such frivolous stuff and feeling so easy, when he must know that it is his fault, his sin, that has changed our beautiful queen into a pale, sad woman?"

I am afraid Ben's opinions and sentiments must have shown themselves a little in his demeanour, for Hubert was conscious of being "overhauled" in a manner not quite agreeable; yet he loved Sallie enough to treat her young brother with civility.

"And so you're going out to South Africa!" he remarked. "You don't look a strong lad. What can you do *there* that you couldn't do as well in England?"

"I can make money faster," Ben answered, quietly, whereat Hubert laughed and exclaimed—

"Well, I never should have believed you would grow up to be a mercenary individual. Sallie, sweet, was that what you expected of your 'baby'?"

"I expected," she made answer, most tenderly, "that my baby would become a good and noble man, and I think he will."

"You don't usually believe that men are 'good and noble' who make money over fast," he said, bitterly; but Sallie, knowing the value of "golden silence," made no reply, therefore Ben did.

"I shall make money, and make it quickly, too; but no human being shall be the sadder or poorer for my gains. It will come to me—every penny—by praiseworthy means, and sanctified for a holy purpose."

There was a long pause after the lad spoke, and then Hubert made answer in subdued and trembling voice—"That is good, Ben. You are beginning well. I trust you will be—enabled to carry out your—dreams. Sometimes men are. I wish before Heaven I had kept some of my boy dreams more to the front; they might have been of use later."

"It is never too late to recall them, is it?" Ben asked, and the Squire shook his head.

"Keep them while they are yours. They will not return in after life, those dreams." Then shaking himself, as if to get rid of a disagreeable burden, he touched Sallie's cheek affectionately, and added—"*One* of my 'dreams' I certainly have stuck to through everything, and it has proved itself no flitting vision, but a blessed reality, the one blessing of my life, I think; certainly the one anchor left me."

She drew the hand which caressed to her lips, and her eyes filled with happy tears.

CHAPTER XII.

"LET LOVE CLASP GRIEF LEST BOTH BE DROWN'D."

NEXT day Hubert said to his wife, "I'm glad you've got the boy here for a little visit. Try and keep him as long as you can; he will be good company for you, especially as I have to go away again for a short time."

There was a covert exultation in his manner which did not escape Sallie's notice, and she asked, anxiously, "Are you returning to Monte Carlo?"

"Yes; but it is only for a few days. The truth is, dear, I believe the tide has turned at last, and luck is coming my way, as I knew it must some time. I had an uncommonly good time of it these last few days, and am only sorry I had very little to stake. However, the little I had did me an excellent good turn, and I promised a friend I'd come back, and have another try. My friend is a clever fellow, and has put me up to a few dodges;—no! don't look alarmed, sweet; I observe you always put on that pretty beseeching sort of air when I speak of 'friends.' But you needn't be afraid. They are not going to teach me to cheat just yet. I'll blow my brains out before I'll descend to tricks, and I wish my wife had confidence enough in me to believe that."

He put on an air of injured innocence, which might have been amusing if it had not conveyed a reproof to Sallie which was as cruel as it was undeserved.

"Dear Hubert," she answered, gently, "I am never afraid that you will do a dishonourable action with your free will, and a full sense of *what* you are doing. What I do fear is, that in some exciting moment you may become blinded, and unable to see what is right and what is wrong; or you may be carried away by an impulse before you have time to comprehend your danger. You know there have been moments when you have stood on the brink of—a precipice; you have told me so, and I tremble for you if such should come again."

"Never fear. I still have the guardian angel who has saved me aforetime, and will save me again; is not that true, Sallie sweet?"

"I wish you would let yourself be guarded and guided by the best of all good angels——"

"Tuts! there's no angel better than my wife! There now, you ought to smile radiantly after such a pretty compliment. Poor darling! I am afraid you grow tired of this shiftless kind of life we lead. But take heart; the long lane is turning at last, and you shall find yourself at the Manor before long."

Sallie could scarcely prevent the shiver which went through her from being noticed, and she could not refrain from saying, "I truly pray, Hubert, that we may *not* be enabled to return to our home by the means you expect. There could be no happiness for me in it."

"You are exceedingly unkind to say so," he answered, hotly—"unkind and inconsiderate, and ridiculously strait-laced to boot. You wear my patience out with your over-strained piety."

These were the hardest words he had ever used to her, and his manner was even worse than his words; for the Squire had suddenly taken a notion that perhaps his wife's prayers were keeping back the tide of good fortune, and he was angry with her.

Shocked and wounded, Sallie put out her hands, and cried, "Oh, hush, hush, dear! Do not let us quarrel. We have never quarrelled. Dear Hubert, whatever comes I shall never say one word that is less than love-fraught to you. Oh, don't, don't let me feel that anything you say to me is less than worthy of you. I *must* always have *that* comfort. Leave me the memory of no ungentle words."

He took the hands she stretched and kissed her fondly, begging pardon for his hasty speech, and promising she should never hear another from him.

Shortly after that he was gone; and Ben had Sallie all to himself for the rest of his visit.

"Shall I not see the Squire before I go?" he asked her; and Sallie said she was afraid not: that Hubert had not fixed any time for his return.

"Are you often left alone like this?" was the lad's next question, and she was glad she could truthfully answer, "No, this is quite exceptional. Hubert is not often away for more than three days, and he has never before gone off again so soon after a return."

"Then you expect he will be back soon? I can't bear to leave you so alone, Mam-lee."

"It has been nice having you, Ben; and I am not lonely. I have plenty of work, and I am quite interested in my pupils; and Hubert will come."

She had never spoken to any one of her husband's failings, and Ben had too much delicate perception of what was fit, to make inquiries, or probe her aching heart with hints regarding the care which oppressed her. He spoke cheerfully of the time to come when they should all be back in England, and he raised her drooping spirits, as before, with his bright pictures of the future. But his heart was heavy for her when the time to bid good-bye came, and he left her alone in that foreign place.

Sallie was too wise to brood over trouble, so when her brother left she hastened to resume the threads of occupation, which had been put on one side (by the courtesy of those whom she taught) during Ben's visit.

Although she did not court society, and had been rather reserved in her intercourse with those around, she had made friends. Her sweet, calm ways, and sad expression, which was so evidently not natural, had won a place for her in many kindly hearts; and all her pupils had some affectionate speech to make about her brother, and how delightful it must have been to have him with her, and how interesting he looked with his fair hair, and slight, high-bred English figure, and how romantically nice the two of them looked together!

Sallie was touched to the quick by those tokens of friendly feeling, and had her heart warmed and encouraged by them. She was particularly grateful to one lady and her daughters—English, like herself—for their sympathy. They had asked her to bring Ben to see them, and after he was gone the lady said—

"Dear Mrs. Holmes, I had a boy just like your Ben—just the same bright hair, and soft eyes. He would have been a man now, if he had been spared to me."

This lady's husband was a Frenchman, and one of Hubert's friends. He was a wealthy man, and in a good position; therefore, his wife was able to render her less fortunate countrywoman much timely assistance.

Again and again had this good lady proved herself Sallie's friend, and therefore, when such kindness was extended to Ben, all his sister's reserve broke down, and she spoke of him to Madame Dubourg with the utmost frankness. She described his motherless infancy, all his winsome baby-ways, his devotion to herself, his simple piety, everything that had made the "Baby" so dear; and, in telling these things, Sallie unconsciously revealed a great deal which she had no intention of showing to anybody.

"Dear girl!" the elder woman exclaimed, "it must have been very hard to part with him. I hope Mr. Holmes will soon return to comfort you. My husband says he expects to be home in a couple of days, and as they went together I suppose they will return together."

"Did—did M. Dubourg go with Hubert? I did not know that," Sallie faltered.

"Yes," replied Madame, in the most unembarrassed manner. "I supposed you knew, but they went off so hurriedly, and I daresay you were engrossed with your brother! My husband was a little out of sorts, and he always declares that nothing sets him up so quickly as the climate of Nice; but I don't think it is very different from what we have here, do you?"

"Nice! It—Nice—is very—agreeable at this season," Sallie stammered, not daring to mention Monaco, yet as sure as could be, that there, and nowhere else, were Hubert and M. Dubourg.

All the pleasure was taken out of her conversation with Madame, and she shortly after that made a pretext to leave, when, hurrying to her rooms, she gave way to her feelings in a violent fit of weeping. She had been so totally unprepared for the intelligence she had received, and she could not help believing that her husband was luring his friend to follow the fatal road to ruin.

Poor Sallie cried herself exhausted, and then fell asleep, and was mercifully unconscious for some hours. She was wakened by a step she knew, and starting up, she saw by the fading light Hubert standing at the far end of the room.

"Oh, have you come? Hubert! Hubert!" she cried, joyfully, as she flew to greet him, then started back in terror when she caught sight of his face. It was ghastly to look upon. What horrible thing had he done? what fearful scene had he witnessed, to make him look like that?

Sallie seemed to turn to stone as she stood and gazed at her husband, who made no attempt to come near her; and so they remained for nigh a minute without uttering a word.

At last Hubert spoke.

"You spoke prophetically when we parted," he said, in a cracked, harsh voice, that sounded in her ears like that of a stranger, "and I spoke prophetically, too. I have won a fortune, and I have done a deadly wrong."

No sooner had he uttered the words than his wife's arms were around him, and her lips upon his face. She said no word, but her action was enough, and he burst into an agony of grief. He was completely unmanned for the time being, and she was powerless to soothe or stem the flood of remorseful passion. But when it had worn itself out, Hubert rallied himself a little, and assuming a kind of sullen defiance, far more terrible to see than the unrestrained anguish which preceded it, he said—

"I don't care whether they identify me, and come down upon me, or not, only I've got to think for *you*. Sallie, I must be off from this place before daylight to-morrow. I don't want it known that I've been here. I shall not go very far from you, and I shall let you know where I am. Then, as soon as you can quietly get away without drawing much attention, you will join me. Do you understand, dear?"

"You have to—hide yourself, Hubert?"

"Not exactly; but I don't want to be asked questions in this city, and it may be inconvenient if it is known that I came here to-night."

"Tell me what has happened, my husband."

"Darling, I can't. You will probably hear rumours, and you will guess the rest afterwards. It might have been better for myself in some ways if I had *not* come to you; but I could not bear to—leave you like that. I felt I *must* see you and beg that you will hold to me still. I have nothing whereby I can be saved from death and hell but you, sweet; but you."

"There is God, Hubert," she said solemnly; and he covered his face and groaned.

Sallie put her hand on the bowed head, and spoke in clear, tender tones—

"I shall never leave nor forsake you, dearest. Tell me

exactly what you wish me to do, and I shall do just that. Also, my husband, be of good courage, for I think another tide besides that of luck has turned now. In the calamity which has befallen you, I can see the Almighty breaking your chain, and setting you on the right road at last. He has let you win the money that is accursed, that He might show you plainly how unblest are such winnings. He has let you do an evil deed that He might bring you repentant to His feet. I have strong faith, dear Hubert, and I know it shall all come straight at last. Be of good cheer."

He rose up, took her in his arms, kissed and blessed her again and again, repeated his few instructions, promised he would write to her soon, that they should not be parted for long, and declared he would take no important step in any way until they met once more. Finally he whispered—

"Your prayers have power, if ever prayers had—pray for me, Sallie."

And then she was alone in the darkness on her knees—alone with God.

(To be continued.)

SHIPS AT REST.

BY L. E. H.

No ripple stirs the glassy bay
Whereon the white ships calmly rest;
Around their keels so longer play
The leaping waves with foamy crest.

The solemn hush is in the air;
The waters gently sleep and dream;
A filmy haze but makes more fair
The Casco's blue, the sail's white gleam.

How gracious seems the heav'nly peace
Those white-winged messengers have found,
Where baffling winds their discord cease,
And angry waves no more resound!

Ah! brief the pause our ships will make
Within this haven, passing fair:
But soon their devious way must take
Where storms beset the paths they dare.

But outworn hulks, with errands spent,
In safe and sunny ports remain;
The wrestling voyage its charm has lent
To calm made sweet through stress and strain.

A "thing of life," the good ship rides
Upon the bounding, sparkling sea;
And in its graceful form abides
A hint of what true lives should be.

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH.

BY EDITH A. BARNETT,

Joint-Author of "Our Nurses."

Part III.—Lung Complaints.

THERE are many forms of lung complaint, differing widely from one another, but it suits our present convenience to treat them all under this one head. Those who have the care of a person suffering from any difficulty in breathing apparatus—whether the difficulty is active and present, or resulting from past illness, or only likely to occur in the future—must always bear in mind what all lung complaints have in common, for on that essential fact is based all wise treatment of the patient. Diseased lungs are unable to take in a sufficient supply of air for the nourishment of the body. The consequence may be sudden death when the supply of air is altogether stopped; or it may be a lingering death when the supply of air gets gradually less and less, until at last one or other of the vital organs ceases to work. More often still, the patient lives on for years, half-nourished and half-alive, in permanent want of vigour and tone, not conscious, it may well be, that there is anything to complain of in his or her lungs, and dying very possibly, at last, of some illness which is not thought to have any connection whatever with lungs, weak or strong. If the lungs do not work strongly and sufficiently, every part of the body is in a state of famine for want of oxygen. Now we know that strong and vigorous persons can support hunger better than the weak and sickly. Just so with the organs of our body; the weak spot first breaks down under starvation diet. And so it constantly happens that weak lungs bring headache, inability to work, stomach troubles, pains in the limbs, and so on; just because every part of the body depends on air, and cannot get air save through the lungs.

There are then three points to be attended to. The first is to strengthen the breathing apparatus; the second, to procure pure air; the third, to lighten the labour of breathing as much as possible.

Let us take first the strengthening of the lungs as a means of prevention in lung disease. Every one is aware that these complaints run in families, and that the child of consumptive parents often dies of consumption. What has he inherited that makes this probable? A narrow chest, and a less than average lung capacity. Even when expanded to their utmost, his lungs do not contain as much air as other people's. A habit of breathing short; watch him, and you will see that only the upper part of his chest moves, and that but little. Two trifles, as it seems, but yet enough to bring life-long disaster, if no means are used for their removal. As for width of chest and lung capacity, that can be increased by many means, notably by systematic exercise of the arms and the muscles of chest and shoulders. Boys who, by reason of a narrow chest, cannot pass into the army or the police force, are often advised to go home for six months, and to exercise with dumb-bells, and then to try again. Violent and sudden exertion is harmful to weak lungs; but gentle exercise, increasing day by day, yet never prolonged to the point of fatigue, is always beneficial. Then again, to breathe deep or short is a habit more than anything else, and like all habits, it is easily altered in the young, and easily imitated from other people. Mothers who breathe badly themselves do not often think to correct a like bad habit in their children, and they often, without any idea of doing wrong, make it impossible for their girls to learn to breathe well, by dressing them in tight clothes. Sometimes they squeeze them for vanity's sake, more often from folly and ignorance. A bad dressmaker is sure to make dresses too tight across the chest, which contraction does not add to any woman's beauty, and which seriously diminishes her lung capacity. Girls are not encouraged to move their arms, even as much as nature prompts them to do. To gesticulate is unladylike; to swing their arms as they walk is awkward. And nowadays a "well-fitting" bodice is often so cut that when it is buttoned the wearer cannot possibly hold out her arms straight by the side of her head. Now it is very well known in these days of ambulance lectures, that this position (*i.e.*, the arms pressed to each side of the head), is the best possible one for expanding the lungs, and is for that reason commonly prescribed in order to revive a half-drowned person.

First of all, the clothes must be made so that it is not only possible but easy, for girl or boy to expand the lungs to their full limit at each inspiration. Secondly, the child must be taught to expand them. It is as easy to give lessons in that as in anything else. It is a lesson that every singer is taught, as a matter of course. And it is quite as necessary to learn it in order to live well, as to sing well.

Hitherto the imaginary patient has been one whose lung complaint could be prevented; there is no chance of complete recovery from lung complaint unless this strengthening of the breathing apparatus is resolutely taken in hand. To change our damp English climate for dry air and sunshine is a valuable adjunct to this strengthening process; but change of air and winters abroad are no good by themselves; and if patients go abroad to wear the same tight clothes, and sit in the same cramped positions, and live in the same closed rooms that they do in England, they are not likely to come back permanently benefited, much less cured. Perseverance, and resolution, and right understanding may counterbalance all the advantages of change of climate, so that the patient who stays at home is cured, while the one who goes into dry, pure air devoid of these mental graces turns out to be incurable.

There are certain defects in the lung, causing mechanical inability to breathe, which are the common result of inflammatory affections, such as pleurisy. When the inflammation passes away, the lung is found adherent to a wall of the lung cavity, or a part of the substance of the lung itself is hardened and will not contract or expand. Left as it is, the patient must go through life using only a part of the organ, and taking in at every inspiration for a given amount of labour so much less air than ought to come to him. This waste of energy and loss of strength accompanying him in every effort must tell against him in the long run, and he cannot be pronounced recovered until all the lung expands as before the illness Such patients, if they happen to be well-to-do, are commonly sent into mountain districts, where the air is so lightly packed together that we all are impelled involuntarily to breathe oftener and deeper in order to get our accustomed amount of oxygen. And this constant effort, by gradual degrees, brings the unused lung into use once more, and we return to our homes on the sea level with the good habit strong upon us. The

patient who is not well-to-do, and who must stay where he is, should endeavour by patience and persistence to produce the same expansion under his less favourable circumstances. Once, in an old German almanac, I found an "infallible" recipe for the cure of weak chests, which ran as follows:—"Procure a tall, straight glass lamp-chimney, take it out to a heath, or some wide, open ground, and putting one end to the mouth, draw through it slowly and gently as much air as it is possible to take in. Count five, and then expel the air slowly. Repeat this for five minutes the first day, and every day increase the time by a couple of minutes until it comes to half-an-hour...." It is scarcely necessary to write the recipe at length. Enough has been given to show that it is merely a plan for strengthening the lungs, based on the well-known faith of all mankind in apparatus and set forms and ceremonies.

The patient is, besides, to live within easy distance of open ground, where pure air may be breathed. In all stages of every lung disease, pure air is the first requisite. Just because the lungs can take in so little air, it is essential that the little should be good. When a patient can swallow only small quantities of food, and that perhaps only with pain, we take care that his food shall be very nourishing and concentrated, but we are not nearly so careful about the air we give to our patient whose breathing is defective. We keep the room warm without ventilation, we crowd heavy woollen curtains round the bed in exaggerated terror of draughts, and we fill the room with furniture and friends, with the best intentions in the world. Whatever else they go without, weak-chested people must have abundant fresh air by day and by night. They must never be so placed that they are compelled to breathe air out of which the oxygen has been exhausted. They must sleep in a room by themselves, not only because they are dangerous to their companions, but because company is fatal to them. They must choose some out-door occupation, where they will take plenty of exercise. In spite of all their exposure, fishermen very seldom die of lung complaints; not anything like so often as tailors, clerks, or bakers. Girls should be domestic servants rather than dressmakers or milliners, and housemaids or plain cooks rather than serving-maids.

If consumptive people are compelled to work in-doors they must take care to choose their pleasures among out-door pursuits. No wise person will ever counsel a consumptive girl or boy to spend evening hours at lectures or classes "improving the mind," instead of walking in the country "improving the body." The judicious mother who knows that her children have inherited weak lungs will bring them up to a love of flowers and birds and all the beauties of nature. Air that contains fluff or dust of any kind is most pernicious, and causes a large mortality from consumption in many trades. No person with hereditary tendency to disease of the lungs can safely work at a dusty business or trade, and no payment in money or position can make it worth his while to risk the danger.

Lastly, the process of breathing must be made as easy as possible, and, indeed, in any acute stage of lung disease there is very little more than this to be done. Nature prompts the patient suffering from inflammation of the lungs to choose that position in which he can best breathe, so that the nurse can judge the state of her patient's lungs from the position he prefers. If only one lung is affected he lies on that side, with the sound lung uppermost where it has most room to expand; if both lungs are affected he lies on his back, and is usually less uncomfortable if he is propped high with pillows between his shoulders. Often he likes to lie with his arms thrown up; a position which is often habitually taken during sleep by persons with defective breathing organs.

Warm moist air is easier to breathe than that which is cold or dry, and so in acute bronchitis it is usual to set a steam kettle to work in the sick-room. Sometimes some disinfectant, such as Condy or Sanitas, is added to the water, which is then intended to purify the air as well as to warm and moisten it. But all these are means of comfort rather than of cure.

In the prevention of lung complaint, much may be done by habitually taking that position of body where breathing is easiest. Thus, needlework is bad, even in pure air, because the lungs are with difficulty expanded when the body is bent forward. Book-work and writing are undesirable for the same reason; if it must be done, it is advisable to do a part of each day's literary work standing at an upright desk. The singer stands because he knows that sitting he can get no volume of sound. The orator stands to address his audience. And every one of us, called upon to do our utmost with our lungs, and to shout over a long distance, would instinctively stand up to do it.

Lastly, those who have weak lungs must be very careful to avoid all chills to the surface of the body. The predisposition to any complaint will not kill a man, if he keeps clear of active disease. And nine times out of ten the exciting cause of lung disease, that which determines the fate of the man, is nothing more than a chill, probably thought little or nothing of at the time. A chill prevents the skin from working, and drives the blood out of the skin to the internal organs, which consequently are overloaded with blood and overworked. The remedy for a chill is to get the blood back into the skin without loss of time, and to get the skin to work again. Warmth to the surface of the body can be applied by means of hot bottles or bricks, hot baths, hot drinks, gentle friction, or all combined. And as the great thing is to use these remedies at once, some or all of them should be kept at hand ready for any emergency. If they have to be fetched or looked for, the mischief will be done before they come. Weak lungs may perhaps endure half-an-hour's strain without breaking down, but it is very unlikely that they will endure for three or four hours without the help from outside that these remedies can bring.

When once active disease has declared itself there is no more hope of prevention, but only of present alleviation and future cure. The choice of treatment passes into the doctor's hands, and varies so much with the many forms of lung disease that I cannot take up that branch of the subject here or now.

If women would only realise that to be well and strong and happy is the most important thing in their lives, and the most wide-reaching in its influence! To be well is to do well. Relative health is possible to those who desire it in no half-hearted way, but thoroughly and earnestly. Time, pains, and patience will do anything. Nature is always on our side, and only asks half a chance, sometimes less. There is nothing so important as the physical condition of women. It is their prerogative to sustain, nourish, and educate the future man. The health of women is a question of national prosperity, morality, and religion.

> "The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
> Together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free;
> If she be small, slight-nurtured, miserable,
> How shall men grow?"—*Louise F. Bryson, M.D*

General view of Dinant-sur-Meuse.

OUR HOLIDAY IN THE ARDENNES.

BY ARCHIBALD CLARKE.

It is only in the last two or three years that the district known as the Forest of the Ardennes has become a favourite summer resort for tourists. Previously Englishmen were occasionally to be met with, who spoke of its wonderful interest and beauty, but the land was *terra incognita* to most, who, indeed, had a very vague notion as to where it was, and listened with mild incredulity to the tales travellers told about the extraordinary cheapness of it's hotels.

But the Great Eastern Railway has changed all that. The district has been described in cheap and alluring guide-books. Special return tickets have been advertised to the most attractive places, and a mad rush of tourists has commenced. Fortunately the district in question is so large that it must be many years before the flood of visitors can flow into every corner of this interesting region. A great writer has somewhere maintained, that the best description of a strange country would be that written by a traveller at the end of a short visit, because the longer he remained, and the more used he became to foreign scenes and customs, the dimmer his perception of them would become. It is this reflection which supports the writer in laying before the readers of this journal a description of a fortnight's holiday in the Ardennes.

At 8 p.m. on the 1st September, 1887, two confident and excited tourists might have been seen on the departure platform of Liverpool Street Station. Twelve hours later two pale and emaciated creatures crept out of the Great Eastern steamer on to the quay at Antwerp. These two, alas! were my brother and myself, and such was the effect of the first twelve hours of our anxiously desired holiday. Having remained in Antwerp a day to recover, we departed by train next morning for Namür.

Namür is situated at the junction of the Meuse and the Sambre, and has been for centuries one of the most important military stations in the Netherlands. Readers of Macaulay will not readily forget his description of the siege of Namür, and all visitors take an interest in viewing the fortifications, at one time considered well-nigh impregnable. Modern gunnery has, however, rendered them useless, but the visitor is more than repaid for a climb by the fine view obtained of the Meuse as it winds its way towards Liege.

The ride by steamer from Namür to Dinant is full of interest and beauty as the river winds its way between steep and densely-wooded hills. Very pleasant we found it leaning over the bow and watching the reflections of rocks, hills, and trees in the still surface of the water. Now and then, perched on the tops of the highest hills, were to be seen the ruins of ancient castles, which add greatly to the romantic interest of the river. Possibly the inhabitants of the valley in the Middle Ages were of the opinion that even romantic interest can be purchased at too dear a price.

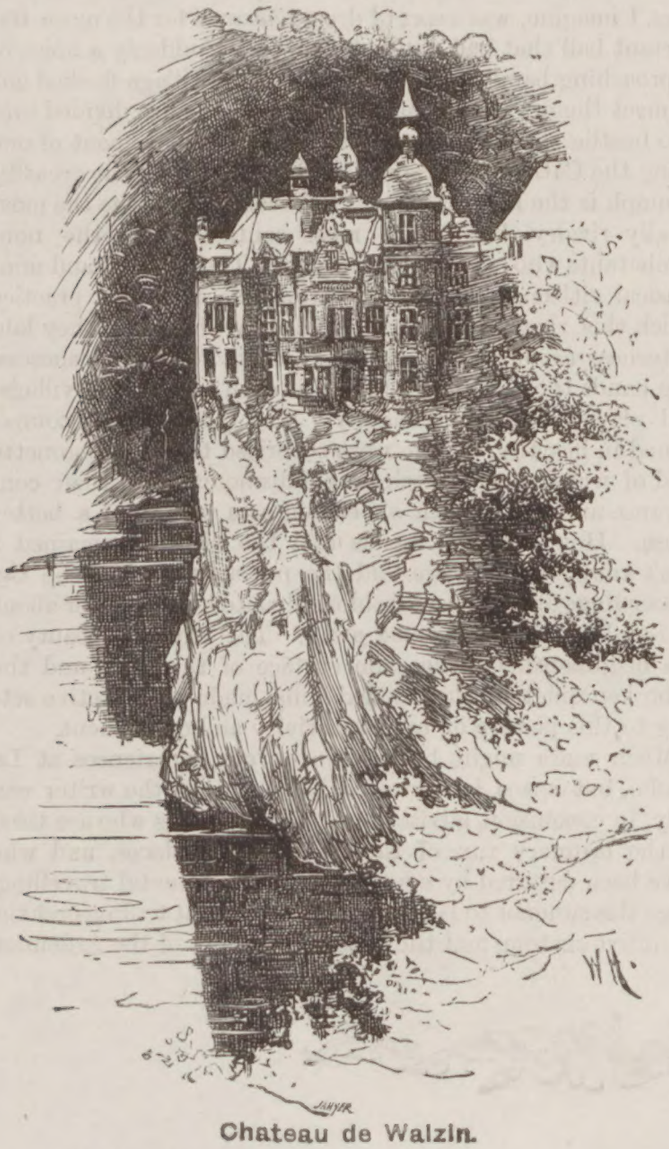
At last we reached Dinant, where we remained three or four days. The city of Dinant consists principally of one long street that follows the course of the river. The houses are, many of them, quaint and picturesque, the most ancient being close down to the landing-stage. Here a row of them, curious in shape and beautiful in colour, gave us the impression that we had been suddenly dropped down into a city of the Middle Ages. Close to these houses are the market-place and the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame. The latter is a beautiful building, the exact date of which is uncertain. The spire, however, does not add to its attractiveness, as it more nearly resembles a Rugby football kicked out of shape than anything else. One of the chief and most comfortable hotels at Dinant is the Tete D'or. The charges at this hotel were the heaviest we experienced in the Ardennes, being 6s. 3d. a day. This, of course, included everything,

extras not yet having been invented by these primitive and simple folk. Living in the Ardennes is probably cheaper than in any other part of Europe, the inclusive charges at many of the best hotels being less than three-and-sixpence a day.

Labour is very plentiful, and, of course, very poorly remunerated. Near Dinant, so I was told, is an old man whose sole occupation consists in looking after one duck. All day long he follows the bird to see that it gets into no mischief. If he sees it about to eat anything likely to disagree with it, he gives it a light tap on the head with a stick, thereby inducing it to look for food of a more strengthening and nutritious character. The neighbourhood of Dinant abounds in places of interest, and almost inexhaustible are the walks and expeditions that can be taken from that centre. One of the best of these is to Givet, on the French frontier, which is about fourteen miles further up the Meuse.

Chateau de la Roche.

At Hastiere, on the road to Givet, our ignorance of the customs of the land laid us open to a severe fright. Two men in blue blouses were seated in a low cart, which, without any apparent means of locomotion, was advancing at a headlong pace. As it got closer the mystery was solved, and our fears subsided. Almost underneath the cart was one dog, which was galloping madly, encouraged thereto by the two men who were seated above. Whenever the unfortunate animal dropped into a more comfortable trot, the men with yells induced it to resume its lightning course. In the neighbourhood of Dinant carriage exercise, in conveyances which are literally dog-carts, is far from uncommon.



Chateau de Walzin.

No one should think of leaving Dinant without having first visited the Chateau Walzin, not that the building is itself particularly interesting, but because of the charming scenery by which it is surrounded. The Chateau Walzin, is situated on the river Lesse a tributary of the Meuse, which joins it at Ansermme, a village about two miles from Dinant. Between Ansermme and Walzin the river presents a panorama of beautiful and varied scenes. At one moment densely wooded hills slope from the water, and the next the river flows between precipitous white cliffs, on the sides of which a few trees and ferns sustain a precarious existence. On one of the barest and steepest of these cliffs the Chateau Walzin is situated.

From Dinant we proceeded to Rochefort, a distance of about twenty miles, which we reached about five in the afternoon, and went out at once to inspect the town. The chief lion of the place is the castle in which Lafayette was imprisoned by the Austrians. We did not, however, visit it, but contented ourselves with wandering about the streets admiring the antiquity of the houses. We had plenty of opportunity of studying the soldiers, as a fair was on in the town, and the main street was lined with little gaming tables, at which these men of war were engaged in gambling for halfpence with the dirty-visaged urchins of the town. The average height of these, warriors, appeared to be somewhere about five feet nothing. This we thought spoke volumes for the forethought of the authorities. In these days of repeating rifles, the mere weight and strength of the men goes for very little. The Belgians have recognised this fact, and have devoted their energies to filling their ranks with men who offer the smallest possible mark

to the foe. In this aim they have been wonderfully successful. The shortness of their men is not more noticeable than their slightness of build; the authorities no doubt hoping, like Sir Lucius O'Trigger, that bullets may be able to pass clean through them without doing any particular harm. No other entertainment seemed provided for the people at the fair, beyond various forms of speculation and gambling, except that the proceedings wound up with a procession, in which a considerable amount of shouting was successfully got through.

We left Rochefort next morning for La Roche, the centre of the Eastern Ardennes.

La Roche is not in itself a particularly inviting village, the sanitary arrangements being bad, and the houses old and uncomfortable without being in any way picturesque. Its surroundings, however, were sufficiently attractive to keep us there the remainder of our holidays. The town is situated at the junction of several valleys, the principal one being the valley of the river Ourthe. On a small eminence behind the town rises the ancient castle, part of which dates back as far as Roman times. A lot of interesting history is connected with this stronghold, as during the Middle Ages it appears to have been in a chronic state of siege.

In the tenth century the castle was besieged by the Bishop of Liege, who, surrounding it, drove the defenders to the verge of starvation. In their distress a brilliant stratagem occurred to their minds. They devoted all the food at their disposal to the fattening of one pig; having done which, they let him run, as though by accident, into the camp of the besiegers, who, noticing his sleek, well-fed appearance, abandoned the siege, thinking there must be abundance of food in the place, for the animals to be in such condition.

From the walls of the castle a grand view of the surrounding country is obtained. On all sides rise hills or mountains sixteen hundred to two thousand feet in height, and densely wooded to the top. Below, the river Ourthe meanders peacefully through green meadows, its current undisturbed by the faintest ripple.

The hotels of the town are all about equal in point of comfort, and I believe the prices are the same at them all, viz., four francs a day. We stopped at the Hotel du Nord, which seems to be the one frequented by all the English visitors, probably because it was very much praised by Mr. Percy Lindley, in his sixpenny guide to the Ardennes. The customs of the town are distinctly primitive; most of the population rise in the small hours of the morning, and go to mass at five. There is a later service at six for those who resemble the sluggard described by Dr. Watts. Owing to a sound Protestant education, we refrained from attending either the five or the six o'clock mass. We usually breakfasted at seven, so as to be able to put in a good walk before dinner, which was served at the fashionable hour of twelve o'clock, noon. Supper was indulged in at seven o'clock, after which (as none of the hotels possessed a drawing or sitting-room) all the visitors of the town spent the evening at the leading café.

There is one important functionary who must not be overlooked. This official has been armed by the authorities with a long horn. Every hour between sunset and sunrise he visits the corners of the principal streets and sounds one blast on his instrument for each hour of the night. In the middle of sleep one is often awakened in terror by these wild, unearthly blasts, which gradually become fainter and fainter, till at last a scarcely audible note announces that the watchman is at the other end of the village.

One of the most memorable sights which we saw during our stay at La Roche was a fair held at a small riverside hamlet, a mile or two from the town. We had gone for an afternoon walk along the beautiful valley of the Ourthe, when it occurred to us that there were more people about than we had ever before seen in our rambles. When wagonettes full of gaily-dressed visitors dashed past us we were convinced that some excitement was in the air. In answer to our inquiries, we were told that the annual fair was being held at a little country village. On reaching the place we found everything *en fête*. Crowds of peasants in blue blouses were standing about the road, indulging in the seductive skittles, or at little gambling tables staking their hard-earned centimes. Inside one of the cottages dancing was in full swing to inspiriting tunes on an ancient concertina. We were told that the musician was making a fine thing out of it, each of the dancers paying him five centimes for his professional skill. This was said in the same awed tone of voice which Englishmen use in speaking of the sums paid to a *prima donna*, and evidently the virtuoso on the concertina was regarded as a lucky individual. This dancing, I imagine, was a sort of dress rehearsal for the more important ball that had not yet opened. Suddenly a noise of approaching bands was heard, and all the village flocked out to meet them. The musicians of La Roche are divided into two hostile parties, the greatest musical achievement of one being the Catholic brass band, while of the other the greatest triumph is the Liberal band. Between these exists the most deadly rivalry, but, as in most contests, it is the non-combatants who have to endure most. The peaceful and non-musical citizens suffer cruelly from the incessant practice which this rivalry calls forth. This day, however, they laid bitterness aside, and combined to make the fair a success. The bands took up their station at each end of the village, and played dances alternately. The peasants, of course, joined in heartily, but we were surprised to see a wagonette load of well-dressed Dutch people dismount from their conveyance and fall to with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause. How long the bands and the visitors remained I don't know, but we were told the peasants would keep the proceedings up to a most fashionably late hour. After about half-an-hour of it we came away. The extreme beauty of the neighbourhood, the calm surface of the river, and the unbroken quiet of the wooded hills, made an effective setting to this picture of human activity and excitement.

Much more might be written on our experiences at La Roche, but space is already exhausted, and the writer can only, in conclusion, advise those of his readers who are tired of the ordinary run of English watering-places, and who have been deterred by expense from Continental travelling, to go this summer to Belgium, and to enjoy at trifling cost the primitive customs and the beautiful scenery of the Ardennes.

YANKEE HELPS.

BY ANNIE R. RAMSEY.

WHEN I first began to keep house in America, after a somewhat lengthy experiment of the same kind in England, I was continually impressed by the one virtue which Americans always insist upon claiming for themselves—their inventiveness. As they have begged and borrowed so many English ideas about the luxuries and decorations of the home, it seems only fair that I should send back to England a few of these labour-saving household helps.

The conditions of life in the early days of this country sharpened the wits of the people in more ways than one, and, very naturally, in the direction of these contrivances and helps; for, as most New England women had to be cook, housemaid, nurse-girl and lady all in one, they naturally set their intelligent minds upon simplifying the work. And to-day, if you go through a house, you will see traces of these ingenious women in every room. Let us visit the kitchen first. Here is a large bottle of ammonia standing on the sink—a strong, unrefined solution, sold very cheap, and used in countless ways. Every dish-washing is made easier by a spoonful of the mixture being added to the hot soapsuds, and its use is especially urged in keeping the glass and silver bright. A table-spoonful to every gallon of water makes an excellent preparation for washing paint or marble. In about the same proportions, blankets and flannels are washed to perfection, while silks, laces, and delicate woollen goods may be freshened in it without injury to *fast* colours. A teaspoonful to two quarts of water will cleanse old bottles, inkstands, and the like, while ammonia mixed with "whiting" makes the weekly silver cleaning a brilliant success!

In the sink proper, a large lump of crude soda is kept over the drain hole, and as it gradually melts it cleans the pipe of all greasy deposit. The lump needs constant renewal, but, as crude soda is very inexpensive, this fact need not trouble you.

A mop for dish-washing is certainly no new idea, but the novelty of the American mop consists in a very long handle, which prevents it from slipping at full length into the water. I could not now return to my old short mop.

A roller towel is easily hung up by any woman, or boy, who can "whittle." A piece of broomstick, two feet long, is cut with two notches all round, some two inches from either end, nails are driven into the wall or door, twenty inches apart on a straight line, and to these nails string is fastened, in such a way that a loop about three inches long hangs from each nail. Into the loops the broomstick is fitted, so that the notch at the ends just receives the cord, thus allowing the broomstick to revolve when the towel is pulled. It is hardly necessary to say that the towel is merely a strip of crash two yards long, with the ends sewed together and slipped over the roller before this is put on the strings. This makes an excellent nursery towel, where the little hands require so much washing, and are negligent about hanging up the towels used.

Stepping into the laundry, we shall find that American housewives provide a large table-settee, and by its use all implements for washing and ironing may be kept in neat order and good condition. The box part holds ironing-blanket and sheet, iron-holders and stands, big safety pins, clothes lines, an apron whose pocket is filled with clothes-pins, and last, but not least, bits of wax tied in clean cotton cloths, kept for the purpose of removing starch or any substance which may cling to the iron, making its surface rough and difficult to work with. But in regard to this last matter, I find many women prefer to pass their irons with great force over a board on which coarse salt has been thickly strewn. In England the irons are often rubbed on the ashes in the fireplace.

In the housemaid's closet we shall find a number of small conveniences, first among them being a dado of oilcloth, which is neither more nor less than a strip of wide oilcloth, turned lengthwise, and tacked closely and securely to the wall, above the mop-board. With this dado all the brooms and brushes may be hung up, quite out of the way, and yet, as their lower ends come against the oilcloth, there is no danger of soiling a nice fresh wall.

Along with the brooms two bags are hung; in one is put all the string which comes into the house around bundles and parcels. It is always untied carefully and wound on a big bobbin, which any man clever with his fingers can make, or a carpenter can turn out for sixpence.

In the second bag are dusters, made from cheese cloth, hemmed, marked, and washed regularly every week—just as the tea towels are.

Then there is always a pincushion in this closet, for the great convenience of the maid or mistress who is careless as to strings and buttons.

Have you ever tried a small bellows for dusting? You have no idea how nicely it blows away all dust from the intricacies of carving, where the finger cannot reach, and from statuary or picture-frames, which the feather brush may grease or stain. In my housemaid's closet I always keep a small glass funnel; it costs so little that even when broken it is easily replaced, and it saves much more than its price every month, by not overflowing, as the tin ones are so apt to do. A similar contrivance is a sugar funnel. I never remember seeing such a thing in an English home, but here they are in constant use. They are of tin, and are simply large funnels with short, wide open throats. Using them to transfer sugar from the bag to the box, or bowl, not a grain is spilled, and they are equally serviceable in "preserving time," when it is wished to pour jellies, fruits, and jams into their glasses and jars.

Where closet room was limited, an ingenious woman drove hooks into the under surface of her shelves, and thereon hanged her cups by the handles, thus increasing her room on the shelves, and setting an example to all other victims of a small closet. The plan has something more than convenience to recommend it, for it actually saves much breakage in the handles of the cups, as there is no excuse for knocking them together.

As I have a private aversion to the waste of soap, I insist upon the servants using the following little contrivance in their dishwashing. I take one of the tins in which peas or beans have been put up, and drive six holes in the bottom with hammer and nails, putting also one hole at the side, near the top. Through this last a string is passed, by which the tin is to be hung up when not in use. Putting a piece of soap in the tin and dabbling it in the water for some time, I can make a fine lather, and, when this is accomplished, the tin is immediately hung over the sink, where every drop

of water drains off, leaving the soap to dry and harden till needed again. In this way a bar of soap can be used to the very last atom, and there is small excuse for the abominable habit of allowing the soap to soak in the water.

Housemaids should be provided with a basket in which to keep every sort of tool relating to the lamp-cleaning. It should hold special scissors—large and sharp ones, the brush for running through the chimneys, clean rags, chamois, wicks, and so on. I speak of this more particularly because lamps are so generally a nuisance, from the fact that they are not kept clean. The brass parts should occasionally be boiled in soda water, and should be rubbed and polished *daily*, so as to be entirely freed from oil or dust; and if in filling the lamp one drop of oil falls on the brass it should be carefully wiped off, for it will cook and fry as the metal heats, and will give rise to the same noxious odours that any burning grease sends forth. The remedy for any ill-smelling lamp is perfect cleanliness, neither more nor less. By insisting upon this from the first, by never permitting a maid to bring into your presence a lamp which is not above suspicion, sending it back again and again if necessary, the lamp-cleaning never becomes a question of great labour.

For the further convenience of my household, I keep all lamps used in hallways, pantries, and kitchen on brackets. These a carpenter can make you, and, after painting or staining the shelf to match the colour of the rest of the woodwork, can fix them to the wall near the place where the lamps are oftenest used. There is thus much less danger of upsetting than if they were placed on tables.

I am careful always to explain to a maid why I insist upon her keeping the lamp quite full—that is, that scientific experiments have proved that a half-filled lamp, left standing, generates from the oil an explosive gas, and when the lamp is lighted this gas may cause a frightful accident. With a *filled* lamp there is no place in the reservoir for the gas, and it therefore passes off harmlessly into the air.

In kitchen or dining-room, or in fact any room where space is limited, a swinging table may be used. This is merely a plank, 2 ft. wide and 3 ft. long, fastened to the wall—under the window, if possible—by means of strong hinges. To support this, when lifted up, is a standard, or bracket, also on hinges, which allow it to fold back against the wall. When the shelf is raised and the bracket pulled out, a strong, steady table is made, which, when no longer needed, can be dropped against the wall, where it takes up no appreciable amount of room. Any carpenter can make this shelf, and if made of common deal he should not ask more than six shillings for it. I used a swinging table as a writing desk for many years, having it hung directly below my window sill, and in one corner of the room, close at hand, the carpenter built me a tiny open cupboard, which I filled with the various odds and ends needed for writing—paper-case, inkstand, pen rack, paper-weight, and mucilage pot. The closet was merely three triangular shelves fitted into the corner, one above the other, about a foot apart, the first one coming just on a line with the window sill. I covered them all with Japanese leather paper, and decorated the edges with fancy brass-headed nails. When I intended to write, I had only to lift my table into position to secure a good light and plenty of room, while every convenience was in the closet near by.

Many American ladies use "box-sofas" in their bedrooms—the double name aptly describing their double usefulness. A carpenter can make you, of some cheap wood, a box 2 ft. wide, 6 ft. long, and 1½ feet deep, with a lid, which is merely a frame filled in with burlaps, or coarse canvas. The box is put on castors to make it possible to move it, and the sides are hidden by a frill of cretonne, or a fall of fringe. The wooden parts of the lid are carefully concealed by cretonne, put on smoothly, and above this is laid a mattress, just the size of the lid, and previously covered with cretonne, the mattress being held in place by a wide tape, which is sewed to the lower edge of the back of the mattress, and nailed to the back edge of the lid frame. Three cushions complete the sofa, and in the lower part of this box, skirts of dresses may be laid at full length, thus avoiding the creasing which comes from much folding, or the stringy look which hanging entails.

Another device for the care of skirts is a set of big bags, open at the bottom, and fastening down the sides with buttons or tapes. In these the more delicate dresses are shrouded from light and dust.

It would profit you little were I to tell of the thousand and one contrivances which are to be found in every shop where household goods are sold. There is no article too humble or too rich to be safe from the inventive genius, and no department of the household work is without some "machine" to further it. An English mechanic might, perchance, find much to copy and improve upon; but all these, good or bad, are beyond my province in writing of what English housekeepers may adopt and adapt for themselves of these "Yankee Helps."

HOUSEHOLD DECORATION.

A new hanging receptacle for a growing climber (ivy, for instance) is now to be seen made of scallop shells, joined together by wire, one forming the base, and six smaller ones, each pierced to the next one with stout wire, forming the sides. The wire is passed through the little flaps at the root of the shells, and wire passed through, near the edge of the shell at the top, suspends the whole. There will be found sufficient depth for earth. As there is no use for them, scallop shells are easy to procure, and most fishmongers will give them to a customer.

Very many small articles are now mounted upon easels, so that they may stand upon a table. Palettes neatly covered in plush are thus mounted. Into the front of these are screwed a few tiny brass hooks, from which to hang old miniatures, medals, or other small-sized curios. Sometimes small pictures or photos are mounted on these easels; while larger ones, holding a basket in which to place a fern, or a large portrait, or photograph, gracefully draped with plush or soft silk, are often useful to fill up a vacant corner.

Some wall pockets are now being contrived in the form of sabots, covered with plush, brocade, or embroidery; sometimes they are the shoes themselves, enamelled with Aspinall's enamel; while others are left in their original wooden condition, and ornamented with floral sprays of leather work, which is afterwards stained and varnished.

Other tasteful pockets are made of Turkish embroidered slippers, worked either in colours or with gold, on black velvet. These are mounted on a square background of plush, which is hung cornerwise to the wall.

One of George Eliot's pungent sayings: "Some folks' tongues are like the clocks as run on striking, not to tell you the time of the day, but because there is summat wrong i' their own insides."

KATINKA'S BETROTHAL.

BY MARY E. ROPES,

Author of "The Fortunes of the Frejhaldts," "Prince and Page," "My Golden Ship," etc.

CHAPTER V.—(*continued.*)

SERGEY Kartinsky, when he awoke in the morning after the attempted robbery of the chapel, felt that a very difficult and important duty lay before him. He had made up his mind to apply to Alexander Yakovitch Maleagin for help to enable Nicolai to pay some of his debts. But he could not, of course, feel very sanguine that his application would be successful after what his uncle had said to him about Nicolai. So it was with very mingled feelings that the young man walked into Uncle Alexander's room that afternoon, and returned his cordial greeting.

"Uncle," said Sergey, seating himself, "I have come to take you at your word."

"Which of my words?" laughed the old man. "I have had so many words with thee."

"If you remember, sir," said Sergey, "you most kindly told me to come to you should I be in difficulty, and require help and counsel."

"Well, my boy——?"

"Well, uncle, I want both to-day, and I come to you for them."

"Good! I like plain speaking. Now, tell me, Sergey, how can I serve thee?"

"I require, to begin with, dear uncle, the loan of rather a large sum of money"—and Sergey stated the amount which he thought would serve his purpose—"to be paid back by me in instalments, as soon as possible."

"Is it for thyself, my nephew?"

"No, uncle; though indirectly I might perhaps profit by it in rather a strange way."

And the young man proceeded to state his brother's case, merely referring to the attempted crime of the night before as *something desperate*, which Nicolai, in his misery and despair, had only just been prevented from doing. In touching words Sergey described his brother's repentance, and repeated his promises of amendment, as well as his confession of love for the pretty, penniless Finnish maiden.

"Ha!" exclaimed Uncle Alexander, as Sergey reached this part of his story. "Then Nicolai is willing to renounce his claim to the hand of Katinka Dolgaretsky?"

"Yes, uncle; it was only his great need of the dowry-money, joined with the wishes of Katia's parents and ours, that made him willing to entertain the idea of making her his wife. And now, if he could but dismiss some of the more important claims upon him, he would marry Minna, leave Russia, and go abroad. My father has long wished him to take charge of a branch business on the French coast, and I think now that Nicolai would be willing to do so. I dare not speak to my father about all this affair of poor Collia's, for you know how hasty he is, and how angry he would be. So far, he knows nothing of my brother's difficulties, and if we can but get all settled without telling him, I shall be thankful."

Uncle Alexander had listened attentively, but Sergey could not judge from his face whether the old man were inclined to grant his request or no.

"Sergey, my boy," said he at last, "thou hast not forgotten that Nicolai himself applied to me for help?"

"I have not forgotten, uncle."

"Then, may-be, thou hast remembered also, with what success?"

"Alas, sir; I remember but too well!"

"Just so. Then what I said to him before, I say again. I love not Nicolai, and my money he shall not have."

Sergey got up from his seat. His feelings were hurt, and he cared not to disguise it.

"Then, sir," said he, "I may as well go at once, for my errand has failed. I see I was wrong to take you at your word after all! I shall know better next time. Good-day, Uncle Alexander."

"Thou foolish boy. Wait and hear all I have to say."

"You have spoken plainly enough, sir," replied Sergey.

"I have been pleading for help for my brother, a loan which I take upon myself to repay, and you tell me you will do nothing for him. Have I any choice but to believe you and go?"

"Talk of the pride of Lucifer!" exclaimed old Maleagin. "It is nothing to thine! I did say I would do nothing for Nicolai; but, my Sergey, I would do a great deal for *thee*. And if this sum of money were likely to promote thy happiness (even though it be through thy brother) I—I——"

"It would. Oh, indeed it would!" cried Sergey.

"And perhaps, indirectly, bring about another betrothal, my boy?"

"It might," replied Sergey, colouring, and looking down. "It is just possible."

"Why then," resumed the old man, his face relaxing into the sunniest of smiles, "thou shalt have the money, Sergey, with thine old uncle's full approval and blessing."

It was indeed with a light heart that the young man went home that day, with a cheque for a handsome sum in his pocket, to be spent in freeing his brother from debt. And Nicolai's joy and thankfulness were so great, and so warmly expressed, that he was more than amply repaid.

That same evening Nicolai told his parents that he had reconsidered the subject of his proposed betrothal to Katinka Dolgaretsky, and had come to the conclusion that it would not be conducive to the happiness of either of them. He begged that his parents would at once make his feelings known to Katinka's father and mother, adding that he was sure the girl herself would hail her freedom with delight. He then frankly added that he found St. Petersburg and its temptations were becoming too much for him, and announced his willingness to give into other hands the department of business which he had there superintended, and himself go to France, and take up the position which his father had long ago wished him to assume. Lastly, with a courage which was new in him, he confessed his love for Minna Frommath, saying that he wished for nothing better than to take the girl with him as his wife.

In spite of his parents' opposition to this wish, the young man's will held firm, and at last they gave a reluctant consent to his engagement and speedy marriage. They only stipulated that all should be kept quiet until Katinka's parents had been spoken to about their daughter; and also that the widow and Minna should move from the cottage in which they now lived, to a small house not far from the Kartinsky's, and belonging to them. This, Minna and her mother were to have rent free, occupying a position a little more nearly approaching Nicolai's own.

Nicolai called next day at Widow Frommath's cottage, but Minna was still too ill and weak to see him. He told her mother, however, that he had made known to his parents his affection for the girl, and that his engagement to her was sanctioned. He also told her of the plan that had been made for her comfort and that of her daughter, and left her full of happiness and thanksgiving.

As for poor Minna, Nicolai's good news was like new life to her, and she began to recover from the time that she learned the object of the young man's visit.

That very afternoon, the Kartinskys were intending to call on the Dolgaretskys, and talk over the giving up of the proposed marriage between Nicolai and Katinka. But ere they could start, who should arrive in his sledge, but Alexander Yakovitch Maleagin, who begged for a few minutes' private conversation with Ivan Matveitch and his wife.

The stipulated few minutes sufficed, apparently, for such business as there was to transact; and when the trio emerged from the drawing-room, it would have been difficult to say who looked the happiest, for all three faces were radiant.

"Come here, Sergey," said his father, calling the young man out of his room. "Come here, we would ask thee a question. Hast thou a liking, my boy, for Katinka Dolgaretsky? Our Collia here appreciates her not, but what sayest thou?"

Sergey flushed deeply. The question was so entirely unexpected, that it took him by surprise. But he answered without hesitation.

"Could I afford to marry, father, I should say that my greatest happiness would be to make Katinka my wife."

"Good!" exclaimed Maleagin, clapping his favourite on the back.

"Good indeed!" repeated Ivan Matveitch, "considering, Sergey, what thy generous uncle is willing to do for thee. See here, my son!" and he held up a paper in which, with all the necessary legal formalities, it was stated that on condition Sergey Ivanitch Kartinsky married Katerina Gregoriovna Dolgaretsky, a handsome sum was to be invested for him, the interest of which, with his own share of his father's business income, would be ample for all the requirements of home life; and, as if this were not enough, Uncle Alexander had promised the delighted parents that Sergey, and none other, should be his heir.

"So now," said Sergey's mother, "we can tell Olga Vassiliovna that our younger son is anxious for the honour that our elder declines; and our errand, after all, will not be an unpleasant one as we had feared."

"Katia, *dooshinka*," said Olga Vassiliovna coming into her daughter's room on the evening of the day that Uncle Alexander had called on the Kartinskys—"Katinka, I have news for thee. Ivan Matveitch and his wife have been here, and we have come to an understanding, and have made fresh arrangements for——"

"Not my betrothal? Oh, mother, anything but that! Dear *Mammasha*, listen to me! Do not hurry me into a marriage with a man whom I dislike. Mother have pity on thy child! He is not for me; I have reason to believe he loves another, and has won her heart."

"What sayest thou? He—Sergey?"

"Sergey? Nay, mother, I spoke not of him, but of Nicolai."

"But *I* am speaking of Sergey," replied Olga Vassiliovna triumphantly. "It is he who, through his parents, asks thy hand. He comes himself to night, to receive his answer from thee, though thy father's and my consent he has already."

As the clock struck nine that evening a loud ring was heard at the bell, and a quick step in the hall. Then the door of the room where Katinka was sitting was thrown open, and Sergey entered.

Have you any doubt, gentle reader, what the young girl's answer will be this time? Think you that as many objections will be made as on a former occasion, to the great event of

KATINKA'S BETROTHAL?

WE have certain work to do for our bread, and that is to be done strenuously; other work to do for our delight, and that is to be done heartily; neither is to be done by halves or shifts, but *with a will;* and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all.—*Ruskin.*

THE best preparation for the future is the present well seen to, the last duty done.—*George MacDonald.*

A WORD IN BEHALF OF THE LITTLE GIRLS.

BY LUCY WHITE PALMER.

"Mamma, can't I do this?"

"O! no, dear," in horrified accents.

"But, mamma, Tom does, and I want to. Why can't I, mamma?"

"Why, my dear, Tom is a *boy*. Little boys can do lots of things that it isn't nice for little girls to do, you know."

And this system, often begun in very infancy, is followed out till the girl grows up into womanhood, either accepting her trammels as a matter of course or chafing vainly all the way along, envying her brothers, cherishing a deep-seated grudge against old Dame Nature, and having the thought which one girl at least expressed when she said: "I fairly hate myself for having been born a girl!" Girls in heathen lands may well feel this, but when girls in enlightened Christian countries feel so something in their training is awry.

Now, while it is true that a big girl in many respects cannot do as a big boy does, and usually has no desire to, it is also equally true (with the exceptions admitted to all rules) that a little girl can do almost exactly what a little boy can, and she usually wants to; and, further, if allowed to, she generally will do it. If mothers will guide instead of thwart this tendency, it will be vastly to the benefit of their girls and not at all to the injury of their boys. There would seem to be no good reason why the training and education of girls and of boys should not be essentially identical up to a certain age. Be not in too great a hurry to impose upon your little girl the burden of her sex. She comes into the world a little, happy, free human being, caring not at all whether she is a boy or girl, so long as her divine and inalienable rights of food, love, and a good time generally are not denied to her. God gives her life; do not you, because she is a girl, curtail her liberty or forbid her the pursuit of happiness in her own and Nature's way. Things that are "nice" for a boy are "nice" for his sister while both are little children. Things that are "proper" for a healthy, active girl are usually just as "proper" for a healthy, active boy. It is a mistaken notion that certain roughnesses, a certain disregard of the proprieties, a certain boisterous liberty, may be allowed to our boys, because they are boys, when they are not permissible to our girls.

Would we have our girls rough and boisterous, then? By no means. And, just as little should we have our boys so. But we would have our boys strong, athletic, fond of exercise; we would let them run and climb, and even shout, if the exuberance of their spirits demanded it—all in the proper time and place. We should not deny the same privileges to our girls, so far as their strength allows them to take them. Some forms of exercise, to be sure, such as jumping rope, running up and down stairs, and the like, are to be deprecated for girls. Many mothers and physicians think them not desirable for boys. But if a girl goes fishing with her brother; if she can walk as unweariedly; if she can climb a tree with as monkey-like facility; if she can drive a nail straight without detriment to her fingers, and has a Yankee dexterity with a jack-knife; if in shooting she can aim straight and hit the target that is in front of her—then she is both a useful and a happy girl. She is laying up strength against the evil days to come when so many women helplessly capitulate to their "nerves." She is keeping her brother in a purer and more refining companionship than any afforded by the rough village boys.—*Babyhood.*

COOKERY.

The following Indian recipe for curry may be useful to those who like the flavour of curry-powder, and it can be made with a variety of ingredients, such as cold meat, minced or cut in pieces, hard-boiled eggs, cold vegetables, fried dice of bread, rabbit, fowl, or a mixture of any of these.

Indian Curry.

Materials.—½ lb. of cold meat, minced; ¼ lb. cold vegetables (carrot, pease, beans, turnips, etc., may all be used when in season); ¼ lb. cold potato; 3 onions; clarified fat or butter, 2 ozs.; stock, ½ pint; half a lemon; shred cocoa-nut, 2 tablespoonfuls; a large sour apple; flour, 2 tablespoonfuls; curry powder, 1 dessert-spoonful; salt, ½ teaspoonful; a small bit of soda.

Directions.—Peel the onions, and place them in a basin with a bit of soda the size of a hazel-nut; pour boiling water on them till they are covered, and let them stand twenty minutes; then take them out of the water, and chop them till fine. Fry them brown in the fat (or butter), dredging them with the flour as they fry; then add the stock (or gravy), and fry that till brown. Place the minced meat, vegetables cut in slices (except the potato, which should be crushed with the bottom of a jam-pot, on a board), or other materials, in the double stew-pan, or brown jar, pour the fried gravy and onions on them, and stew for an hour or more, stirring occasionally. The cocoa-nut and sour apple (chopped fine), which may be omitted when not in season, should be added before stewing.

If toast or hard-boiled eggs are used, they should only be added to the gravy ten minutes before serving; fresh meat will require two hours to stew, but cold meat or vegetables will not take quite so long. The time for cooking cannot therefore be given, but must be matter for consideration according to the materials used. Squeeze the lemon over the curry before serving, and serve dry rice in a separate vegetable dish. I. L. Richmond.

New Puddings.

There is a time, especially in the spring, when most of us are tired of the ordinary run of winter puddings, and of rhubarb into the bargain; and yet we have little chance of change, for the apples are over, and even the earliest gooseberries are not in. Variety is peculiarly welcome just then, so we offer a few recipes which may prove very suitable for those who have much to do, and little time in which to do it.

Chestnut Pudding.—Shell one quart of chestnuts, and remove the brown skin by plunging them in boiling water and then in cold. Then boil them until they are quite soft, drain the water off and mash them smooth with the rolling pin; add one quart of milk, one tablespoonful of sugar, and another of flour, when hot, one saltspoonful of salt. Boil until thick, put it in a pie-dish and bake till brown.

A tasty Rice Pudding.—Boil a teacupful of rice as you would for curry; when cold, mix it with the same quantity of currants (well washed), one egg, an ounce of butter, and two ounces of sugar. Tie it up in a floured cloth, and boil it forty-five minutes.

A Cheese Pudding.—Warm one ounce of butter in a quarter of a pint of new milk, and mix with it three ounces of grated cheese and five of bread, add two well-beaten eggs and a little salt. Bake it half an hour.

Lemonade Pudding.—Make some lemonade with a pint of cold water, two ounces of white sugar, and the juice of two Seville oranges and two lemons. Pour it upon a French roll rasped; when it has soaked up all the liquor, stick it over with half an ounce of blanched almonds. Pour a sweet sauce over the whole.

A new Cornflour Pudding.—One cupful of cornflour, one half cupful of flour, one tablespoonful of treacle, one and a half cupfuls of sour milk, two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, one teaspoonful of soda, one saltspoonful of salt, and one of cinnamon. Boil one hour and a half.

Pudding a L'elegante.—Cut thin slices of light white bread, and line a pudding-shape with them, putting in alternate layers of the bread and orange marmalade, or any other preserve, till the mould is nearly full. Pour over all a pint of warm milk, in which two well-beaten eggs have been mixed. Cover the mould with a cloth and boil for an hour and a half.

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

We spoke of summer frocks last month, and are now at liberty to consider cloaks and mantles.

As a rule we look for the weather to be exceptionally fine in June, and as a natural accompaniment, we expect to see clouds of dust; this being the case, it is wise when selecting our clothes to choose such shades and materials as will show it least. A cloak of thin fawn-coloured cloth would look summerish and yet protect the wearer from both showers and dust; it is provided with a little sling in front to rest the hands in, and keep it closed at the same time. If the weather is too oppressive for a long cloak and the season too cool to go without any kind of wrap, a short mantle is a great comfort, and we give the sketch of one which is very suitable. It is made of thin black silk covered with grenadine and trimmed with satin or broché bands while loops and bows of satin ribbon give a pretty finish to the whole; no difficulty would be found in making this garment at home, for the edge only wants a false hem underneath, and a piece laid perfectly plain down the front on either side. Rather large black lace cloaks are coming in, made pretty much like the thin cloth coats already spoken of, only fuller, and small mantles or mantelettes are made of broché in rather diminutive patterns. Grey is a very good colour for any one not wedded to black, because it can be worn with a black or a grey dress, and now that black and grey are so popular, the combination is not an extravagant one. Small outside pockets are very much in favour, and they go well on a beige or alpaca dress. They are mostly shield-shaped, and to ensure safety should be machine-stitched all the way round, whatever trimming may be laid on afterwards. These pockets are most convenient just for a handkerchief, and perhaps a few loose pence, but purses should never be put in them; to do so is to put temptation in other people's way. A pocket in the skirt should always be made, and with the present style quite a large one may be placed among the back pleats. A small but much stuffed pocket always shows, a large deep one never does if put backward enough.

Children never look so well as when dressed plainly, and very pretty little dresses and cloaks may be made smocked at the neck and over the shoulders with a sash at the waist. It is never advisable to try and *fit* a dress on a child, for it it is much more comfortable in a loose garment, and moreover, free to tumble about as all little mortals love to do. I may here mention that at any fancy shop paper can be bought with dots at regular intervals to iron off on material, and thus render smocking a much easier undertaking than formerly; the only drawback to this charming work is that the plain honey-comb smocking is rather apt to catch the dust on dark materials, but for washing-dresses nothing looks so nice. Sun bonnets of print for children cost very little, either of time or money, if made at home, and we can supply a pattern that is very simple to understand and put together, and is also suitable for making in a woollen material for winter.

Smart, thin frocks for young girls, a little more than children and yet not quite grown up, are being made with full bodices quite high up to the throat, sleeves with one or two puffs coming just below the elbow, rather full plain skirts, undraped, but made up on a foundation that is edged with a foot kilt, and a bunch of ribbons matching or contrasting with the dress on the left side of the skirt, a little forwarder than just under the arm. One or two of the ends must reach the bottom of the skirt.

The pretty tea-aprons that so effectually preserve a nice dress from spot or stain, or hide the deficiencies of an older gown, are being made larger than ever, and are no longer exclusively of white or light coloured muslin, but are often of black satin. Rather a large one has what may be called the skirt made with one irregularly shaped corner of piece lace, just as if the maker had not had quite enough of satin for the purpose, and is edged with black lace about 1½ inches wide only fulled enough to make it lie right at the corners. The corner formed of the piece lace is just tacked up under a pretty bow of ribbon, and a similar bow decorates exactly the opposite corner of the bib, which is composed of a longish piece of pleated satin trimmed with lace on one side, and fastened under loops of ribbon to a point about one-fifth of the distance down the right side of the skirt, and from thence lace is continued all the way down the seam between the satin and the piece lace. To all workers let me recommend the new Dorcas thimble, made of silver outside and in, but with a complete shield of steel between the two. It has both large and small needle-holes on it, and ought to be procurable at all silversmiths, or wherever thimbles are usually sold.

Patterns.

Patterns of the sun bonnet mentioned above may be had for 4d. each; of the long cloak for 1s.; and of the mantle for 10d. Stamps for either to be enclosed to M.L., office of Mothers' Companion. Every effort will be made to dispatch patterns promptly, but they cannot be sent by return of post.